

The Fungi CD: 2nd Edition 2009

Publisher: *Field Naturalists Club of Victoria*, 2009. RRP \$15.00

Over 1100 high quality images, along with detailed descriptions of 250 species of fungi, are featured on the 2nd edition of *The Fungi CD*, published under the auspices of the Field Naturalists Club of Victoria Fungi Group.

A clearly written introductory section includes basic information about biodiversity, the interconnectedness of all living things, the importance of fungi to our everyday lives and their vital ecological roles as decomposers, parasites and symbiotic partners with plants. There is a section about slime moulds with a summary of a talk by Paul George.

For those baffled by the ever-changing names of fungi, there is a brief overview of the Linnaean system of classification and the work of Elias Fries (1794–1878) who used morphology and spore colour to classify fungi. Recent research, especially DNA analysis, is changing our understanding of the genetic relationships between different species of fungi and leading to much taxonomic debate.

The 'fungi skills' section advises on making fungi collections, obtaining spore prints and photographing fungi. An illustrated glossary defines commonly used terms.

There are several ways of finding a name for the species included on the CD. Gilled or non-gilled fungi can be searched for by shape, genus or species. The 'shape' page has a button for selection by spore colour. Each species is illustrated with up to five photographs, showing different stages of growth and variations in colour, with a short paragraph describing basic field characters. A separate section (accessed by clicking on the name of the species) gives detailed descriptions of biology, including life mode and growth habits; size, shape and colour of the pileus (cap), lamellae (gills) and stipe (stem); general comments, and a description of microscopic features. A full list of references is included in this section.



Congratulations to all members of the Victorian Fungi Group and particularly Jurrie Hubregtse who took most of the photographs and compiled this informative fungal resource. Further images are of the excellent quality you would expect from such accomplished photographers as Arthur Carew, Paul George, Virgil Hubregtse, Ed Grey, Ivan Margitta, and Geoff Lay.

The CD can be used on PCs, Macs, and Linux computers. It needs a screen size of 1024 x 768 pixels so some scrolling is required if the CD is used on a small laptop.

Given the sheer number of fungal species, many of which are yet to be described, it was unrealistic of me to expect that this new fungal resource would help to identify scores of my unnamed photographs. However, it did enable me to identify several species and update other names. It is an excellent guide; I highly recommend it and eagerly await the next edition.

Sarah Lloyd

999 Denmans Road, Birralee, Tasmania 7303
Email: sarahlloyd@iprimus.com.au